



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

News Release

September 26, 2005

ICE SEEKS ADDITIONAL VICTIMS IN IMMIGRATION FRAUD SCAM *Pair behind scheme ordered to pay nearly \$100,000 in restitution to known victims*

SAN DIEGO – U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the San Diego District Attorney’s office are appealing to immigrants who were bilked as part of an employment visa fraud scheme to come forward so that they can be compensated for their losses. The two San Diego residents behind the scam pleaded guilty to felony charges in Superior Court here Friday and have been ordered to pay restitution to their known victims.

Bemilda Asuncion Ruiz, 37, also known as “Linda”, and her business partner, Jose Rolando Cesena, 57, were arrested in March after ICE investigators uncovered a widespread immigration fraud consulting scheme. From 1993 to 2005, the pair operated a downtown business called Legal Services Network where they met clients and persuaded them to apply for employment-based visas for which they did not qualify.

Ruiz and Cesena, who pleaded guilty to multiple counts of grand theft last week, are scheduled to be sentenced December 13. Prior to their sentencing, as part of a plea agreement, Ruiz and Cesena will be ordered to pay restitution to the known victims. Ruiz will be required to pay \$72,648 in restitution and Cesena will pay back \$26,935. The defendants have also been ordered to pay restitution to any additional victims who come forward.

ICE is appealing to anyone who believes the two consultants defrauded them to contact the District Attorney’s consumer hotline at (619) 531-4070 or the Mexican Consulate in San Diego at (619) 231-6634.

“We want to do everything we can to prevent people from preying on and exploiting vulnerable members of the immigrant community,” said Michael Unzueta, special-agent-in-charge for ICE investigations in San Diego. “We are working the District Attorney’s Office and the Mexican Consulate to try and identify all those who may have fallen victim to this unscrupulous criminal activity.”

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.